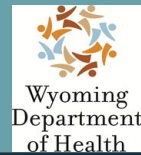


PROVIDER SUPPORT CALL TRAINING

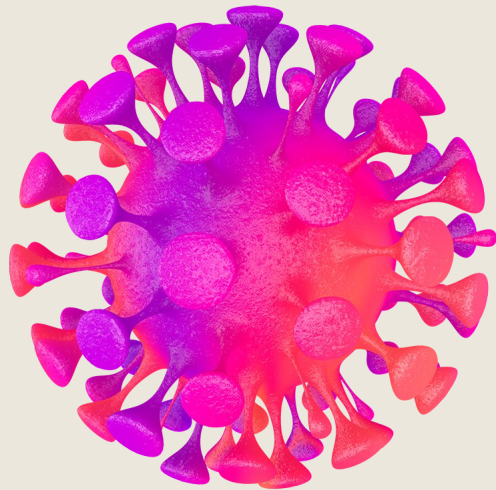
Maintaining Wellness in Times of Crisis

WDH Division of Healthcare Financing
Developmental Disabilities Section
March 30, 2020



COVID-19

An
Unprecedented
Circumstance



As we are all aware, we are now experiencing a most unprecedented event. The spread and effects of Coronavirus has required all of us to break normal routines and approach life in a manner that is different and unfamiliar to us.

With that in mind, let's jump into today's training.

Training Agenda

- Understanding the importance of enhancing medical self sufficiency.
- Prevention topic 1: Fall risk and mitigation
- Prevention topic 2: Skin integrity issues

Today's talk is not about rules, policy, or regulatory flexibility. We are going to discuss some ongoing aspects of participant care that becomes even more important in times of potential or actual crisis.

Topic number one: Understanding the importance of enhancing our medical self sufficiency. Here we will discuss some basic steps of medical-based preparation.

Next we will visit upon two prevention topics: Understanding fall risk and fall risk mitigation, and skin integrity issues.

Hopefully, discussion of these topics can potentially help decrease the need for EMS or other professional healthcare interventions.



Enhancing Medical Self Sufficiency

It's been said that extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures...and that's where we find ourselves today. Systems of support that we have always been able to rely upon might temporarily be delayed or even unavailable. More than ever we need to be mindful of the possibilities and resourceful in response to unfamiliar circumstances. This means that to truly be prepared, we need to expect the unexpected.

Enhancing Medical Self Sufficiency

- Anticipate the unexpected
 - Emergency Medical Service delays
 - Prescription medication delays
 - Over-the-counter medication shortages

An example of this could involve our reliance on our communities Emergency Medical Services. In the past, when calling 911 for an emergency situation, we could depend on a rapid response from professionally trained medical personnel. Recent anecdotal experiences from other communities around the globe have illustrated the possibility of local healthcare resources becoming overwhelmed by Coronavirus related illness. We all need to recognize that emergencies happen and that the possibility exists that we may need to find ways to provide supports to our participants if professional medical help were to be delayed.

Obtaining prescription medications may be delayed due to supply chain issues.

Spot shortages to commonly used over-the-counter medications.

Enhancing Medical Self Sufficiency

■ Evaluate

- Learn from the past: re-examine prior incident reports
- Re-familiarize yourself with plans of care with an emphasis on medical needs and risks

The obvious first step is to determine your current capacity to handle the unexpected or any situation you periodically face.

A good way to conduct this evaluation is to look back on past experiences to determine what sort of emergencies you have had to respond to before. You might consider re-examining past incident reports to identify historical concerns or patterns.

A participant's Plan of Care, if written correctly, will provide information regarding concerns such as being a high risk for falls, choking or other areas that might require the activation of the EMS system. Even though you are already aware and addressing these concerns, this gives you an opportunity to be extra vigilant and place even more rigorous methods of prevention. As the old adage states "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Enhancing Medical Self Sufficiency

- Prepare for the unexpected
 - Prescription medications
 - Over-the-counter medications
 - Review CDC recommendations for taking care of illness at home
 - First Aid kits

Ensure that all prescription medication refills that require a physician's approval are submitted early allowing for a longer than normal approval time. Consider asking the prescribing physician to prescribe a 90 day supply instead of 30 day.

Ensure that your participant is not running low on PRN prescription medications. Because PRN medications are only used periodically, it is easy to overlook a shortage of these until they are needed. Again, check to see if physician approval is required before refilled and give adequate time for processing.

Ensure you have an adequate stock of commonly used over-the-counter medications. Fortunately, many stores are beginning to restock these items that were initially depleted by “panic buying”. Check for the availabilities of these items, if required, with every visit to the store.

The possibility might arise that you may be required to take care of ill

individuals in their homes. The CDC has some comprehensive information on their website regarding this topic. The link for the CDC can be accessed on the Developmental Disabilities Section website. Please take time to review this very valuable information.

Please review the contents of your First Aid kit and evaluate as to whether or not it would be adequate for you to respond and provide treatment in an emergency situation in which professional medical treatment might be delayed. Fortunately, many comprehensive first aid kits are still available from the usual retail outlets.

Enhancing Medical Self Sufficiency

- Re-evaluate and modify

Obviously, preparedness is a never ending process and needs constant re-evaluation. Frequently take stock of your situation and modify as needed.



Risk Mitigation

There's an old emergency room adage that states "the best emergency medical response is the one that never had to happen". Through taking a close look at certain high risk areas, we may be able to identify and modify areas of concern and, thereby, reduce our reliance on outside system assistance. As it has often stated "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure", this is especially true in time of limited resources.

Risk Mitigation - Falls

- Our ID population experience a high risk for falls and fall related injuries
- Falling is the number one non-medical reason for hospital visits by our participants.

Let's talk about falls. Falls are the most common cause of injury for people with intellectual disabilities and are, therefore, more at risk for fall-related fractures, and other fall-related injuries. According to a recent study involving 1400 adult individuals with an intellectual disability, approximately 18 percent of those individuals experienced a fall at home during the year of study. As a matter of fact, injuries or potential injuries sustained by falling is the number one non-medical reason for emergency room visits by our Wyoming participants.

Risk Mitigation - Falls

- Reasons for increased fall risk include:
 - Medications that cause dizziness
 - Genetic syndromes that involve muscle weakness or dysfunction
 - Age related issues

There are numerous reasons for this increased risk of falling, but chief among them is a high prevalence of use of fall-risk-increasing drugs such as antidepressants, antipsychotics, anxiolytics, and sedatives. Any single medication from just one of these categories is enough by itself to increase risk. Please consider the fact that many folks are prescribed several of these medications to be given at the same time, which increases their risk of falling even more.

Also, many of the genetic syndromes experienced by our participants include components of muscle weakness and/or dysfunction which also contributes to a higher risk of falling.

Additionally, as our participants get older they may face age related issues such as decreased visual acuity and balance and gait issues.

Clearly many of our participants are at a high risk for falling and fall-related injuries.

Risk Mitigation - Falls

- Falls are largely preventable
- Per the CDC, a single fall risk intervention significantly contributes to the prevention of falls for a high-risk individual

The good news is that, with the right mitigation measures, falls are largely preventable. According to a recent CDC study, a single fall risk intervention significantly contributes to the prevention of falls for a high-risk individual.

Risk Mitigation - Falls

- Know your participant(s) and their plan of care thoroughly
- Explore past histories
- Observe your participant

Obviously, one of the best weapons at our disposal is to know our participants and their needed supports thoroughly. Take note of any past history of falls and contributing factors. Take time to freshly observe your participant with a sharp focus on their ability walk. In other words, verify your understanding of their abilities to ambulate safely is accurate.

Risk Mitigation - Falls

- Perform a walkthrough assessment of the service environment looking for:
 - Inadequate lighting
 - Loose cords or tubing
 - Trip or slip hazards
 - Unstable objects

One of the easiest fall risk mitigations strategies is to simply assess the participants service environment for hazards that might increase the chance of a fall. As you physically move through the service area, ask yourself the following questions: 1) Is there sufficient lighting for the participant to see potential hazards; be sure to consider nighttimes as well if the participant will be accessing a bathroom. You might consider adding or keeping a light on at night around immovable hazards such as at the top of stairs. 2) Are floors clutter free? Check for any electric cords or oxygen tubes that feet may become entangled in. For essential cords or tubing that can't be moved, consider tightly taping them down with duct tape for the full length of exposure. 3) Are there any loose throw rugs and uneven flooring edges that a person can trip on? Consider removing or taping down small throw rugs with double-sided tape and use duct tape for those uneven flooring edges. 4) Is there any unstable object that might fall over if ever used by the participant for support? Lastly, ask yourself if there is anything in the environment that you have tripped or stumbled over.

Most environmental hazards can easily remedied once they identified.



Skin Integrity Issues

It's only natural for us to concentrate on COVID-19 related issues at this time; however, it's important for us not to lose focus on other actual or potential health issues. With this in mind, let's talk about skin integrity issue awareness. Skin integrity simply means healthy skin. A skin integrity issue might mean the skin is damaged, vulnerable to injury or unable to heal normally. Skin integrity issues present themselves at many different levels of severity; however, today we will concentrate on an extremely serious condition known as a pressure ulcer.

Skin Integrity Issues

- Pressure ulcers
 - aka bed sores, and decubitus ulcers
 - can develop over hours or days
 - if left untreated, can lead to debilitating injury or even death

Pressure sores, also known as bedsores and technically as decubitus ulcers are injuries to skin and underlying tissue resulting from prolonged pressure on the skin. Bedsores can develop over hours or days and, if left untreated, can lead to debilitating injury or even death.

Skin Integrity Issues

- Pressure ulcer risk factors
 - inability to independently change position
 - incontinence
 - decreased cognitive abilities
 - being under or overweight
 - dehydration
 - poor nutritional status

Risk factors for the development of pressure ulcers include, but are not limited to 1) the inability to independently change position, 2) incontinence, 3) decreased cognitive abilities, 4) decreased sensation, 5) being under or overweight, 6) dehydration, and 7) poor nutritional status. Many in our participant population are already at high risk because of their day-to-day health status. Let's put this in the context of having to provide home care for someone with a debilitating acute illness. It's obvious to see that any participant in that situation is at enormous risk for developing pressure ulcers.

Skin Integrity Issues

- Pressure ulcers
 - results in injury or death of tissue
 - occurs while laying or sitting

Pressure ulcers develop on tissue over bony prominences due to compression of the tissue resulting in reduced blood flow and injury or death of the affected tissue. It is important to understand that the development of pressure ulcers is not limited to those confined to a bed, as pressure ulcers frequently occur during prolonged sitting in a chair.

Skin Integrity Issues

- Pressure ulcers - high risk areas
 - heels, knees, hips, spine, tailbone, elbows, shoulders and shoulder blades, back of the head, and ears

As stated before, pressure ulcers develop over bony prominences. High risk areas include the heels, knees, hips, spine, tailbone, elbows, shoulders and shoulder blades, back of the head, and ears.

Skin Integrity Issues

- Pressure ulcers - signs and symptoms
 - Unusually warm skin
 - redness
 - spongy or hard skin
 - breakdown of top layer of skin
 - pain may or not be present

Signs and symptoms of pressure ulcers include unusually warm skin, redness, spongy or hard skin, breakdown of the top layer of skin. Pain may or may not be present.

Skin Integrity Issues

- Pressure ulcer - prevention
 - Pressure ulcers are preventable
 - Frequent reminders or actual physical repositioning
 - rapid detection and addressing incontinence
 -

Again, the good news is that with vigilance and appropriate care, pressure ulcers are preventable. Frequent reminders or actual physical repositioning is a very effective way of preventing pressure ulcers. Rapidly detecting and addressing incontinence is vital as this contributes to the rapid development of pressure sores. Assessment of high risk areas to detect any signs and symptoms should be performed frequently with any concerns reported to the physician immediately.

Skin Integrity Issues

- Pressure ulcer - prevention
 - nutrition
 - hydration
 - exercise

Maintaining a healthy nutrition and hydration status for your participant combined with exercise tolerable by the participant will also contribute to healthy skin integrity.

Questions?

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As always, please feel to contact me with any question you might have